

## IN THE CLAIMS

Claims 1 and 133 have been amended. Claims 24, 32, 36, 52, 53, 131, and 132 have been cancelled. Claims 1, 60, 61, 130, and 133-151 are pending in the present application. The following is the status of the claims of the above-captioned application, as amended.

1. (Currently Amended) A microbial trypsin variant having chymotrypsin-like activity, comprising ~~one or more modifications selected from the group consisting of~~ the specific combination of modifications as follows:

- (a) ~~a~~ substitutions at ~~one or more~~ positions corresponding to positions 144, 193, 198, 201, 218, 223, 227, 228, 229, 230, and 231 of amino acids 25 to 248 of SEQ ID NO: 2;
- (b) ~~a~~ deletions at ~~one or more~~ positions corresponding to positions 192, 197, and 226 of amino acids 25 to 248 of SEQ ID NO: 2; and
- (c) an insertion between positions corresponding to positions 224 and 225 of amino acids 25 to 248 of SEQ ID NO: 2;

wherein the microbial trypsin is (a) a polypeptide comprising an amino acid sequence which has at least 70% identity to amino acids 25 to 248 of SEQ ID NO: 2; or (b) a polypeptide encoded by a nucleotide sequence which hybridizes under at least low stringency conditions with nucleotides 202 to 801 of SEQ ID NO: 1 or its complementary strand, wherein low stringency conditions are defined as prehybridization and hybridization at 42°C in 5X SSPE, 0.3% SDS, 200 µg/ml sheared and denatured salmon sperm DNA, and 25% formamide followed by washing three times each for 15 minutes using 2X SSC, 0.2% SDS at 50°C, wherein the variant has chymotrypsin-like activity and has an amino acid sequence that has at least 70% identity to the amino acid sequence of the microbial trypsin.

2-23. (Cancelled).

24. (Cancelled).

25-31. (Cancelled).

32. (Cancelled).

33-35. (Cancelled).

36. (Cancelled).

37-51. (Cancelled).

52. (Cancelled).

53. (Cancelled).

54-59. (Cancelled).

60. (Original) The variant of claim 1, which is encoded by the nucleotide sequence contained in pEJG66.1XLGOLD which is contained in *E. coli* NRRL B-30627.

61. (Previously Presented) The variant of claim 1, which is in a form of a precursor comprising amino acids 1 to 24 of SEQ ID NO: 2 as a prepro region, or a portion thereof, linked in translation reading frame with the amino terminus of the trypsin variant.

62-129. (Cancelled).

130. (Previously Presented) A detergent composition comprising the variant of claim 1 and a surfactant.

131. (Cancelled).

132. (Cancelled).

133. (Currently Amended) The variant of claim 1, which comprises the substitutions V144T + S193A + D198S + Q201M + A218I + N223S + R227S + P228T + N229S + Y230T + S231P, ~~and~~ the deletions V192\* + K197\* + A226\*, and the insertion G224GT of amino acids 25 to 248 of SEQ ID NO: 2.

134. (New) The variant of claim 1, wherein the microbial trypsin has an amino acid sequence which has at least 70% identity with amino acids 25 to 248 of SEQ ID NO: 2.

135. (New) The variant of claim 134, wherein the microbial trypsin has an amino acid

sequence which has at least 75% identity with amino acids 25 to 248 of SEQ ID NO: 2.

136. (New) The variant of claim 135, wherein the microbial trypsin has an amino acid sequence which has at least 80% identity with amino acids 25 to 248 of SEQ ID NO: 2.

137. (New) The variant of claim 136, wherein the microbial trypsin has an amino acid sequence which has at least 85% identity with amino acids 25 to 248 of SEQ ID NO: 2.

138. (New) The variant of claim 137, wherein the microbial trypsin has an amino acid sequence which has at least 90% identity with amino acids 25 to 248 of SEQ ID NO: 2.

139. (New) The variant of claim 138, wherein the microbial trypsin has an amino acid sequence which has at least 95% identity with amino acids 25 to 248 of SEQ ID NO: 2.

140. (New) The variant of claim 1, wherein the microbial trypsin has the amino acid sequence of amino acids 25 to 248 of SEQ ID NO: 2.

141. (New) The variant of claim 1, wherein the microbial trypsin is encoded by a nucleotide sequence which hybridizes under low stringency conditions with nucleotides 202 to 801 of SEQ ID NO: 1 or the nucleotide sequence of nucleotides 202 to 801 of SEQ ID NO: 1, wherein low stringency conditions are defined as prehybridization and hybridization at 42°C in 5X SSPE, 0.3% SDS, 200 µg/ml sheared and denatured salmon sperm DNA, and 25% formamide followed by washing three times each for 15 minutes using 2X SSC, 0.2% SDS at 50°C.

142. (New) The variant of claim 141, wherein the microbial trypsin is encoded by a nucleotide sequence which hybridizes under medium stringency conditions with nucleotides 202 to 801 of SEQ ID NO: 1 or the nucleotide sequence of nucleotides 202 to 801 of SEQ ID NO: 1, wherein medium stringency conditions are defined as prehybridization and hybridization at 42°C in 5X SSPE, 0.3% SDS, 200 µg/ml sheared and denatured salmon sperm DNA, and 35% formamide followed by washing three times each for 15 minutes using 2X SSC, 0.2% SDS at 55°C.

143. (New) The variant of claim 142, wherein the microbial trypsin is encoded by a nucleotide sequence which hybridizes under medium-high stringency conditions with nucleotides 202 to 801 of SEQ ID NO: 1 or the nucleotide sequence of nucleotides 202 to 801 of SEQ ID NO: 1,

wherein medium-high stringency conditions are defined as prehybridization and hybridization at 42°C in 5X SSPE, 0.3% SDS, 200 µg/ml sheared and denatured salmon sperm DNA, and 35% formamide followed by washing three times each for 15 minutes using 2X SSC, 0.2% SDS at 60°C.

144. (New) The variant of claim 143, wherein the microbial trypsin is encoded by a nucleotide sequence which hybridizes under high stringency conditions with nucleotides 202 to 801 of SEQ ID NO: 1 or the nucleotide sequence of nucleotides 202 to 801 of SEQ ID NO: 1, wherein high stringency conditions are defined as prehybridization and hybridization at 42°C in 5X SSPE, 0.3% SDS, 200 µg/ml sheared and denatured salmon sperm DNA, and 50% formamide followed by washing three times each for 15 minutes using 2X SSC, 0.2% SDS at 65°C.

145. (New) The variant of claim 1, wherein the microbial trypsin is a wild-type microbial trypsin.

146. (New) The variant of claim 1, which has an amino acid sequence with at least 70% identity to the amino acid sequence of the microbial trypsin.

147. (New) The variant of claim 146, which has an amino acid sequence with at least 75% identity to the amino acid sequence of the microbial trypsin.

148. (New) The variant of claim 147, which has an amino acid sequence with at least 80% identity to the amino acid sequence of the microbial trypsin.

149. (New) The variant of claim 148, which has an amino acid sequence with at least 85% identity to the amino acid sequence of the microbial trypsin.

150. (New) The variant of claim 149, which has an amino acid sequence with at least 90% identity to the amino acid sequence of the microbial trypsin.

151. (New) The variant of claim 150, which has an amino acid sequence with at least 95% identity to the amino acid sequence of the microbial trypsin.